Jitambulishe!
Namba Yangu, Maisha Yangu

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
State Department for Immigration and Citizen Services

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT NEW IDENTIFICATION TECHNOLOGIES

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The Government of Kenya has prioritised enhancing service delivery to citizens by embracing Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

Kenya's current registration and identity ecosystem is around 30 years old and has been rendered obsolete by newer technologies. It is overdue to upgrade to conform with global requirements and align it to a digital economy. Kenya's National Registration and Identity system currently trails behind other countries in the region, exposing it to non-compliance sanctions by international standards' enforcement agencies.

Digitisation of registration services will also address challenges related to identifying and authenticating Kenyan citizens. It will also promote the security of primary registration documents (birth certificates and national identity cards). A reliable and centralised identification system will also support better management of social programs, delivery of essential services and transparency and accountability in government operations.

Digital registration will further promote a reliable identification and authentication system for all citizens and potentially reduce fraud linked to identity theft. Difficult-to-forge identity will also help enhance the overall safety and security of the country.

The government has developed the following as part of the digitised registration system:

- Maisha Namba
- Maisha Card
- Digital ID
- National Population Master Register

Frequently Asked Questions About New Digital Registration Technologies

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MAISHA NAMBA

1. What is Maisha Namba?

Maisha Namba is a unique personal identification number assigned to every Kenyan citizen upon registration, typically at birth. This number will be a lifelong personal identity number from birth to death.

Maisha Namba will serve as the birth certificate number for newborns. It will also serve as the registration number for government services, including enrolment to educational institutions (NEMIS) and health insurance (NHIF), and as the ID number upon reaching 18 years old. It will also serve as a Personal Identification Number (PIN) for KRA and NSSF, among others. Upon demise, the same number will translate to the death certificate number.

2. What are the benefits of Maisha Namba?

- Promotes faster registration of births and acquisition of birth notification and birth certificate
- Creates convenience through access to an instant digital copy of a birth certificate
- Provides a single numerical identifier which can be used throughout an individual's lifetime for government services requiring identification.
- Creates a secure, faster and reliable identity authentication process.
- Enables the integration of personal identification information across government databases.
- Eliminate multiple instances of citizen enrolment and registration.

3. Will I need to register afresh as a Kenyan?

A Kenyan will not be required to register afresh. However, the following new features have been incorporated to add value to your current identity:

- A Digital Identity to help you to transact digitally (online)
- Electronic ID with a chip – to load your data and use it for authentication and validation.

4. Will my current ID number become my Maisha Namba?

Yes: your current ID number will be retained and referred to as your Maisha Namba. The ID number will appear on the face of your Maisha card.

5. What about Kenyans who were born before the launch of Maisha Namba and are still waiting to be 18 years of age (0-17 years)?

Registered Kenyans aged 0 to 17 will continue to use their birth certificates as a form of identification. Additionally, the government will generate and assign them a Maisha Namba. Once developed, the government can access their records in the master database and retrieve their newly assigned Maisha Namba at the point of contact when the individual seeks government services. The individual will then be able to use their assigned Maisha Namba for all services and identification.

6. Will Maisha Namba negate the need for voter registration?

No, the purpose of voter registration is to document eligible voters who are 18 years and above, along with their preferred constituencies. The Maisha Namba will come in handy to ensure that voters are positively identified by linking the voter's register to the master database. This linkage will eliminate the issue of deceased voters. It will also assist in cleaning the voter register, as all records of deceased individuals will automatically be flagged in the voter's register through the linkages with the master database.

7. How inclusive is the implementation process? Has the government considered the unique needs and circumstances of marginalised communities?

The Maisha Namba is being applied to the existing Civil Registration (CR) system, which encompasses all individuals residing in the country, regardless of their citizenship or social status. The system will incorporate a fair and relevant adjudication process for such cases.

8. Is there a plan to assist those with difficulty accessing the registration centres? Are there plans for mobile registration units and home visits?

Yes, the Maisha Namba will be assigned upon the registration of births and deaths. This service is already being offered at the lowest level of government representation, i.e., the sub-location level. Furthermore, countrywide registration drives and outreach services will also be available.

9. What is the difference between Huduma Namba and Maisha Namba?

- The rollout of the 3rd generation ID card will not require a new mass registration of individuals. Instead, it will enhance the capacity of the current civil registration system to issue digital IDs. The government will, therefore, not initiate fresh registrations for individuals but will use the existing identification information held by various government agencies to streamline and efficiently deliver services. Individuals will be issued a digital ID as a virtual representation of their physical identification documents.
- The digital ID will not solely rely on fingerprint biometry like Huduma card but will seek to widen the pool of biometrics in the national identification system to include iris and facial recognition.
- The 3rd generation card will use cryptographic technology to store individual data in the card, an advanced and more secure technology than Huduma Namba, which contains a chip or QR code.
- 3rd Generation ID card system will support web-based and offline identity authentication by public and private agencies. This system will, in turn, support digital signature functionality and allow holders to securely log on to e-service platforms and give legally binding digital signatures.
- The Huduma programme relied on one registration system (NIIMS) and a master database. In contrast, the proposed system will develop a master database and different registration modules for each primary registration agency to carry out their legal mandates, e.g., NRB will have a national digital identification module/system.
- The NIIMS programme was to print all certificates and identification cards. In the proposed system, each department will issue its documents from the master database. e.g. NRB will issue the digital identity.

10. Will I be prevented from accessing government services if I don't have the Maisha Namba?

No, you will not be prevented from accessing services. You can access all government services with your current National ID card.

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MAISHA CARD (3RD GENERATION ID)

11. What is a Maisha Card (3rd generation ID)?

This document will bear the Maisha Namba mentioned above. It will replace the current 2nd generation ID. It will feature enhanced security details, including a microprocessor electronic chip with encrypted data that is difficult to forge or manipulate. The card will include a photo image of the applicant, an ID number, a card serial number, biometric data, biographic data, residential particulars, and high-end security features.

12. Why is the government replacing the 2nd generation ID with the 3rd generation ID?

- Enhancement of the national identification ecosystem will improve access to legal identity registration services, thus helping Kenya to conform with UN SDG Goal 16.9, which provides for access to legal identity for all.
- •Kenya is a signatory to the East Africa Common Market Protocol that requires member countries to issue electronic national ID cards which conform to the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) prescribed standards for travel documents.
- The underlying production technology has been in place for 28 years and has reached an unattainable level of obsolescence; therefore, it needs to be replaced with modern technology.
- Advancements in ICT and identification technologies have made the current card increasingly vulnerable to counterfeiters due to outdated security features.
- While the current 2nd generation ID has been upgraded to plastic (Teslin) material, Teslin cannot support an integrated chip. Adopting polycarbonate material would allow for the inclusion of a chip and enhance the security functionality of the card by allowing other authorised agencies to validate the card.
- The 2nd generation ID primarily uses fingerprint biometrics for personal identification. Including other biometrics, e.g. facial recognition and IRIS, will provide additional means for a person's identification.
- The manual indexing and filing of statutory registration records is outdated, insecure and unreliable. Retrieval of statutory records is labour- and time-intensive and inefficient. An adequately integrated EDMS system will ensure records are availed efficiently at the point of use.
- Implementing the 3rd generation ID system will promote a customer-centric approach by fast-tracking registration and issuance of ID cards. Applicants will be able to interact with the system and get feedback on the status of their ID application.
- The 3rd Generation ID card will be a secure polycarbonate electronic card installed with a machine-readable chip or QR/cryptographic code for data storage and retrieval to enhance validation of the card by user agencies.

- The current ID card system is semi-automated. The system consists of identification and manual enrolment processes at field stations, central data processing, ID card production and data archival. The new system will manage the data of all registered citizens, refugees, and foreigners on the fingerprint biometric technology platform, which enhances data accuracy and reliability. The system matches the fingerprints of an application to fingerprints stored in the database. It helps detect cases of double and illegal registration.

13. What are the benefits of Maisha Card (3rd generation ID)?

- A national electronic ID card compliant with ICAO standards will enable Kenyan citizens to use it as a travel document within the East African community.
- Automating the registration processes will enhance efficiency in the ID registration process, improve access to registration services, and reduce the cost of doing business in ASAL and remote areas.
- Modernising the ID processing systems, equipment, and materials will result in issuing a more secure identification document, thereby reducing counterfeiting.
- Modernising the ID and its processing system will make the delivery of government services faster, more efficient, and transparent.
- Upgrading AFIS to ABIS will create a more inclusive identification system.
- The electronic card will facilitate more efficient validation of personal identification data by public and private institutions, thereby simplifying citizens' access to services.

14. What is AFIS and ABIS?

AFIS stands for Automated Fingerprint Identification System, while ABIS stands for Automated Biometric Identification System.

Both systems are used to determine the uniqueness of individuals using their biometrics. AFIS specifically utilises fingerprint biometry, while ABIS includes other biometrics such as facial and iris recognition.

15. Will I need to replace my ID with the 3rd generation ID?

Replacing your ID is optional. However, should you wish to access the benefits of the 3rd Generation ID, you will need to replace your 2nd Generation ID.

16. What will happen to my Maisha Card after ten years? What will I need to do?

As a cardholder, you must apply for a duplicate and surrender the older card upon collecting the new one. The older card will be perforated, as is currently done with expired passports.

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DIGITAL ID

17. What is Digital ID?

Digital ID, short for Digital Identity, is a unique representation of an individual, organisation, or device in digital form—a virtual representation of your physical ID. It typically includes information such as personal attributes, credentials, and authentication methods.
Digital IDs provide:

- Digital identification tools
- Authentication tools
- Data/attribute wallets
- Authorisations
- eSignatures

The newly launched Digital ID, which serves as the virtual representation of your physical ID, will be utilised to verify and authenticate the identity of individuals or entities in various online transactions and interactions. The Digital ID will offer a secure and convenient means to access digital services and safeguard against identity theft.

18. What do you mean by a virtual representation of my physical ID?

A virtual representation of an individual's physical ID is a representation of their identity in the digital realm. It is electronic or digital and may include personal information, biometric data, or other identifying attributes. This virtual identity is used for online interactions and authentication, allowing individuals to establish their identity electronically without physical documentation.

19. What is online authentication?

Online authentication is the process of verifying the identity of a user or entity that is accessing digital services over the internet. It ensures that the person or entity trying to access a system or service is who they claim to be. Online authentication can involve usernames and passwords, biometric data (such as fingerprint or facial recognition), security tokens, two-factor or other methods to confirm identity.

20. What is the National Public Key Infrastructure (NPKI)?

The National Public Key Infrastructure (NPKI) is a framework used to support secure digital communication and transactions. It relies on public and private cryptographic keys, digital certificates, and trust authorities. The NPKI provides a foundation for secure online activities, including digital signatures, encryption, and authentication. Governments and organisations typically use it to establish trust and security in their online services.

21. What is a digital signature?

A digital signature is a cryptographic technique employed by an individual to digitally sign their documents, enabling the recipient to authenticate the legitimacy and integrity of the respective digital record, message, or transaction. It involves using a private key to create a unique digital signature that can only be generated by the key owner. When someone receives a digitally signed document, they can use the corresponding public key to verify that the legitimate sender created the signature and that the document has not been altered since it was signed.

22. What are the benefits of Digital ID?

Digital ID offers several benefits, including:

- **Security:** It enhances online security by providing a reliable means of verifying the identity of individuals or entities, reducing the risk of identity theft and fraud.
- **Convenience:** Digital IDs streamline access to online services, making it easier for individuals to access government and commercial services without needing physical presence.
- **Efficiency:** It reduces paperwork and administrative burdens associated with identity verification, leading to more efficient and cost-effective processes for government and businesses.
- **Accessibility:** Digital IDs can improve access to critical services for individuals who may have difficulty accessing physical offices due to geographic or mobility constraints.
- **Trust:** Linking digital IDs to a secure infrastructure like NPKI establishes trust in online transactions, fostering greater confidence in digital interactions.
- **Legal Validity:** In many jurisdictions, digital signatures created using Digital IDs have legal validity, making them suitable for contracts and official documents.
- **Sharing Reliable Data:** Our vision is based on having the government serve as the 'authoritative source.' Sharing governmental data that has been verified for digital services increases trust in the public and private domain, ultimately establishing a single source of truth by using the Once-Only-Principle (data is collected once and then reused).
- **Increased Internet Access and Mobility:** An accelerated shift to digital-first servicing provides more access to the internet and greater mobility.
- **Business Opportunities:** Digital identity is a natural source of new business opportunities, enabling many applications.
- **Effortless Transactions:** With Digital IDs, transactions and legal agreements can proceed seamlessly, saving time and resources while fostering growth in the digital economy.

23. What access controls will the government deploy for the Digital ID system?

- **Biometric Authentication:** This method involves using unique biological characteristics of an individual, such as fingerprints and retina scans, to verify their identity. Biometric authentication is highly secure because these traits are difficult to forge or replicate. When a user accesses the Digital ID, they must provide their biometric data (e.g., fingerprint or facial scan) for authentication.
- **Facial Recognition:** Facial recognition is a type of biometric authentication that uses a person's facial features to verify their identity. It captures and analyses specific facial characteristics, such as the arrangement of facial features, and compares them with a stored database of authorised users. Users would need to have their faces scanned for authentication.
- **3-Factor Authentication:** This refers to a multi-layered authentication process that requires three different types of credentials or factors to verify a user's identity. The three factors typically include:
    - Something You Know: This could be a password, PIN, or knowledge-based information only the user should know.
    - Something You Have: This involves a physical item the user possesses, such as a smart card, mobile device, or security token.
    - Something You Are: This factor relies on biometric data, such as fingerprints, retinal scans, or facial recognition, as mentioned earlier.

Combining these three factors makes it significantly more difficult for unauthorised users to gain access to the system. This multi-factor authentication approach enhances security by requiring users to provide multiple forms of proof of their identity before granting access to the Digital ID system.

24. What will be the disclosure process to safeguard the information collected from unauthorised access?

This process will align with the Data Protection Act, specifically Section 43 and the related Subsidiary Legislation in Sections 37 and 38.

25. Will the personal information collected through the Digital ID system be used for surveillance and negative profiling by the state?

No, the government will only use the data/information for the specific purpose for which it was collected, per the Data Protection Act (DPA) requirements.

26. Will I know what the government is doing with my data?

Yes, you will. The Data Protection Act mandates us to provide you with information regarding how your data is used.

As a user of the digital ID, you will retain control over your identity and data. Any entity or individual seeking access to your data will need your authorisation as the owner."

27. Who can access personal data? What approvals will be necessary? And can individuals control what data is stored and how it is shared?

These actions will comply with the provisions outlined in the Access to Information Act and the Data Protection Act regarding data access by individuals and entities

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28. What Government services will one access using the Digital ID?

The acquisition of registration and identification documents, including but not limited to birth and death certificates, National Identification cards, passports, social security, and health services, as well as other services that necessitate real-time authentication of individuals' particulars and identity.

29. Will the system capture any biometrics?

The Digital ID system will capture and compare your biometrics against the National ID database to validate your identity. However, it will not store the biometrics.

30. Will the Digital ID be used for other purposes, such as banking, subsidies, welfare, and tax compliance?

Yes, the digital ID is a valid national ID. Like the National ID, it can be used to access commercial and public services through the E-citizen platform.

31. What will happen to the other identification cards, the ID Cards and identification numbers, NHIF, National ID, NSSF and Driving License, among others?

As a single unique identification number will be employed, the requirement for other identification numbers and possibly certain identification cards will be gradually phased out. By the end of the rollout phase, all stakeholders will have been fully onboarded.

32. Are there plans to collaborate with private sector organisations, such as technology companies and service providers?

Yes, private sector organisations are essential partners in implementing the Digital Identity Management System.

33. Will I be prevented from accessing government services if I don't have a Digital ID?

No. The digital ID is optional.

34. Can I use the online and physical ID, or must I choose one?

The physical ID is mandatory for all Kenyan citizens aged 18 years and above. The digital ID is an optional virtual form of your National ID. You can choose to have both the physical and digital ID or only the physical ID.

35. How do I register for the digital ID?

How do I register for the digital ID?
Option 1: Self Generation

Step 1: Log onto eCitizen (Gava Mkononi App).
Step 2: Click on the Activate prompt to initiate the process.
Step 3: Read and, if agreeable, accept the terms and conditions of use to proceed to the next step.
Step 4: Click the start button.
Step 5: Follow the prompts to scan your face and fingerprints.
Step 6: Wait as the application generates your Digital ID.
Step 7: If successful, you will receive a congratulations message from the app along with a depiction of your Digital ID.
Step 8: At this point, you can return to the home page to acquaint yourself with the Digital ID homepage. While on the home page, you can swipe to view the QR code.
Step 9: You have now completed the registration for a Digital ID and can start e njoying the service.

Option 2: Assisted Generation
An individual may encounter an unsuccessful self-registration for various reasons. One of these reasons could be that the individual's biometrics do not match, or the individual's phone does not meet the required specifications for self-activation. In such cases, the individual should visit a Huduma Centre or an NRB office where NRB officials will assist them in generating their Digital ID.

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NATIONAL MASTER POPULATION REGISTER

36. What is the National Master Population Register?

The National Master Population Register will amalgamate existing and independent databases into a single integrated register that will be the central reference for all data about Kenyan citizens and foreign residents. Specifically, it will consolidate population data maintained by the Integrated Population Registration System (IPRS) and the National Integrated Identity Management System (NIMS).

37. What is the Integrated Population Registration System (IPRS)?

It is the National Master Database that interlinks multiple government departments to harmonise and consolidate the information of all registered individuals into a Unique Personal Identifier (Maisha Namba). This Maisha Namba is assigned whenever individuals register for various documents. The Government of Kenya aims to establish a centralised, single source of accurate information.

38. What are some expected benefits of improved data sharing within the government?

Improved data sharing within the government will facilitate the following:

- Provision of authentic data.
- Avoidance of duplication, which can lead to data integrity issues.
- Enhanced convenience for citizens, eliminating the need to carry multiple documents to access services when the required data already exists in the databases.

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GENERAL QUESTIONS

39. Has the government established redressal mechanisms to handle complaints and grievances?

Call Centres have been established at various levels to address any complaints and potential challenges that users may encounter while using the system. Furthermore, the government has designated a dedicated phone number and email address to manage these complaints. Additionally, Huduma Centres nationwide will be utilised to address concerns from the public.

40. To what extent has the government engaged the public in creating awareness of the new registration technologies?

Stakeholder engagement forums and consultative meetings constituted integral components of the rollout plan. Furthermore, as part of the implementation plan, the government initiated public awareness and participation by engaging with grassroots communities through organised activities involving NGAO and other stakeholders.

41. Will there be regular audits of the Maisha Namba, Maisha Card, and the Digital ID system to ensure its compliance with the legal and regulatory framework?

Yes, regular audits will be conducted for compliance and quality assurance purposes.

42. Has the development of the system, implementation and communication been benchmarked with other countries?

Yes, extensive desk reviews and country visits have been conducted, including visits to countries like Estonia, where the digital ID concept has worked successfully.

43. What are the assurances on data protection?

Regarding data privacy, all stakeholders, including the government, are bound by the Data Protection Act (DPA), which contains comprehensive provisions for safeguarding data privacy and imposes severe penalties for breaches.

44. Will the rollout be countrywide?

Yes. The new technologies are being applied to the already existing Civil Registration (CR) system, which encompasses all individuals residing in the country.

45. What legal requirements have guided the development process of the new digital registration technologies?

The new technologies represent a modernised approach to civil registration and, consequently, fall under the governance of civil registration laws. The primary legislation guiding civil registration is the Births and Deaths Registration Act, supplemented by the Constitution of Kenya. Other relevant legislation includes the Registration of Persons Act, the Children Act, and the Statistics Act. More recent legislations applicable to civil registration encompass the Data Protection Act and its supporting regulations, the Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Act, and the Access to Information Act. Additional laws relevant to the civil registration function include the Kenya Information and Communication Act, the Legitimacy Act, the CPC Act (Cap 75), and the Evidence Act. Furthermore, the government has updated regulations under The Births and Deaths Registration Act 149 and the Registration of Persons Act Cap 107 to accommodate all adjustments made to the registration process.

46. Is the rollout synergetic with the amendments to the Act that established a National Integrated Identity Management System ("NIIMS")?

Yes, the Act is synergistic in that it mandates the compulsory registration of births and deaths for all individuals, regardless of their citizenship status, if such events occur in Kenya.

47. Has the government ensured compliance with international standards such as ISO/IEC 2700?

Yes, the government has complied with all international Digital ID system deployment standards, including standards for a secure system hosting environment, electronic card production, biometrics data capture, and enrollment.

48. How has the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner been involved?

The Kenyan Office of the Data Protection Commissioner was actively involved in developing new identification technologies. Their roles included ensuring data protection compliance, conducting privacy impact assessments, providing policy guidance, promoting public awareness, facilitating stakeholder collaboration, and ensuring the technologies aligned with international best practices. Their multifaceted participation was vital for safeguarding citizens' privacy and data protection rights while developing and implementing these identification systems, ensuring adherence to data protection laws and global privacy standards.

49. What about Kenyans who are not technology savvy? Will they be left out?

No one will be left out. Digital ID is optional, and Kenyans will be able to access services using their Maisha Card.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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